Dear Paul, 7/9/72

Your mailing of 7/3 arrived promptly. I have not been able to get to it sooner. I will address some of the contents separately because I have separate files for them, like your FOI stuff.

First a generality and a strong caution: you took a long time to make any response to my request, addressed to almost everyon, that they give thought to the purposes and consequence of Wecht having access to the autopsy material. Your response was af such a nature that it is clear you had not really thought this through. At least, I so felt. I attributed it to a combination of factors, chiefly your preoccupation with your thesis. No criticism. I don't think I carried it further with you because of the pressure of many things, the nature of your letter, and the long delay. In any event, what I then foresaw as a potential hazard is closer to coming to pass. There is not now nor was there anything then any of us could do to prevent this once the government decided upon it. I do not for a moment think the decision is Marshall's, and you have copies of several of his letters to me which could not be more specific in saying he leaves these decisions up to the government. The difference possible for us is in damage to us and our work and others and our potential for doing anything about it. But in general, nobody would think, nobody will work together, and those who for years have done no work have taken the lead and dominate. Only the never-informed and under-informed are active. Coinciding with this is what I regard as the most reprehensible personal misconduct by Gary and Jerry, each of whom separately misused my material, both knowing my objections to it and their basis and neither ever arguing against my view. They are among the few with whom I was able to discuss this in person. Howard is the only other who comes to mind. Both admit doing this. Their defense of thievery and inevitable misuse is, in Jerry's words, the requirement of "good conscience." It was all entirely unnecessary for I had done what both did long before that in giving Cyril promptly the information they stole to give him. So, they gave him no information he didn't have. Gary attempted a defense that boils down to he duplicated my work. And that he did from what I also gave him in confidence, not on his own. I leave the ethical and moral consideration you may or may not see here to you. To me they are clear and they must be a turning point. You know the concern I have had about such things for years. It is not simply that I am entitled to my own work. It is that there are too many incompetents, sick and self-seeking who can mess things up as so often has happened.

My correspondents will be fewer. As I told you, I have broken off with both Gary and Jerry and asked from each the return of all I gave them. Jerry has not responded to this. Gary has done no more than express a willingness. I have also written Sylvia. She avoids cpntact with reality and the specifics of my letter in her answer/ She reports what I knew, that she had been sick. I have not washed this soiled linen in public or in any general distributions for a number of reasons aside from the obvious undesirability. One is that in her letter Sylvia without realizing it says what could be damaging to her, and that I don't want to spread around. Another is that she also without knowing it establishes that the successful espionage and abuse of confidence includes more than has come up. It is without possibility of questioning. I would rather be able to detect more such things and know what has been done to the extent possible.

Coinciding with this there have been a few strange things, all possibly innocent but none safely ignored. There are carefully limited mail problems, limited to those with whom I am in touch on this and related to the Ray case. Your letter came faster than any of Howard's, whose should come overnight. Or Gary's. The little mail from N.O. is prompt. All from strangers also is. Letters from the Whites take as little as two days from the time of mailing until I have them/ And along with this, one young man Ross Halston, who I had never met before, went to DC to work with the CTIA for a week. His story is that there were $500 grants available for special work and he said he'd do his on the King case. He used this as an excuse for working on the JFK case and so told me. I met him for the first time when Howard was here,6/14, when I was in D.C., in the CTIA office. He came up the next day. I met him at the bus and took him back to it. Howard spent more time with him and was dissatisfied with everything about him. He told Howard and me that he was leaving for his Minnesota home the next day and would not have time to look Gary up to discuss what he had inadvertently disclosed to Howard and me about what Ned has been up to. His source was Ned, he said and we believe. This was before I knew of the theft but after it had happened. Mary phoned me in distress over a curt letter I had written her only because messages she had given others, I recall Bob Smith, had not reached me. She then told me

Ross had appeared t ere the day he was supposed to be in Minn., introduced himself as a good friend of mine, and enjoyed the courtesies of the house, including access to everything she has. I presume this also means during the day, when she works. And it turns out that Ross had told the CTIA people he was going to Texas. He knew their connection with Mary. I have checked this with Howard and there is no doubt in his mind about the accuracy of my recollection. And howard read and corrected the memo I wrote when we returned from taking Ross to the bus. He had, as I said, been with Ross when I wasn't. Ross did phone Gary from the airport, as he said would be all he could do, but what airport and when I do not know. If all of this is innocent, I'm not going to assume it.

So, the "thinking" that seems to dominate the to me insane actions of those who are out of it-and I mean 100% except for zanies - is that of Sylvia, the brilliant mind that concludes you are an agent because of disagreement on your melon project. We will all have to suffer it and survive its potential as best we can.

In repropsect, I have also wasted too much time trying to keep straight those who coil by nature, those intellectually and emotionally incapable of it, and those who are in any event worthless. It is an error I can't afford to continue. I expect my correspondents to be very few and those who are working on the case now only. We must, somehow, escape the dead hand of the past or there can be no future.

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JNS phoned me 5 a.m. his time several days ago to remind me on the Cuban munitions story then in t e papers about Harper and 9H213. Only one other name appeared in the Post, that of Seal. I don't know how much can now be done with this, but I have done some backgrounding. There is too much other news and too few available reporters with the political-convention demands alone. Major newspapers are stripping even their local staff. One reporter to whom I com unicated this told that if anything happened in his city, the remaining reporters would all get coronaries trying to cover it. There was expressed interest at several papers, so if you see anything relevant it might be good to send it to me. If not too much trouble. You really should do as you are doing, get the thesis behind you.

Gervais clip: thanks. Ivon has broken off on this, not responded to about 3 ltrs. Has snet nothing since about first week June. Don't know why. Will write JG when can.

Retruning herewith T-P 2/8, FBI Men Shoot Man in Holdup. If it is because t e FBI men shoot, can understand. None of the names, of the agents of Gerald Allen seem to have meaning to me. Would you indicate on back what you had in mind and return clip?

Urley 3: Got through fllo okay, only damage from county problems which hurt us and our promperty and make work for me.

There is no way of helping Nichols. He wont listen and he is an instinctive fuckup. Add his incredible ego and you have the insoluble. Marshall will rpobably give him access. I discussed this with Bud after reading the CA dedicion, hurtful enough. Bud agrees that the best thing Nochols can do is drop it here, but I feel he is incapable of this as he is of detached reasoning. He should have lost for reasons other than he did, and reversal on these does not rule out sustaining already-bad decision without asking the Supreme Court as now constituted to confirm it.

Lattimer: I presume you refer to Physicans and Residents, something like that. Have but haven't read. I intend to add littel if anything from this to PM, where I do to Lattimer with words, as HR also says, what he does with scalpels. I'll probably just add a note. He is now firmly dated and I think should be ignored. Perhaps after going over piece I'll change my mind. But there is no chance of undoing him in press and much change of duplicating what Sylvia succeeded in doing with Belin, Please believe me. I have it straight from Ben Bradlee, the JFK pal. And working reporters, not executives. This understanding must dominate everything we do or we ll be constantly counterproductive.

Jackie page enclosed. If yours is different, please send copy. If you do not need this, pls. return. But don't go to trouble making copy if it is differnt. Just keep and tell me.

No word from Goulden, who is writing a new book and promoting the current. I haven't nudged him because I am too busy with other things. Strongly encourage your leaving him alone until after I speak to him if you have no special questions for me to ask him. I'll cue you in after I do speak to him. We must be careful not to annoy people like him. Gen-

erally speaking, I'd say his attitude is of probable overall agreement with us and of sincere mistrust of FBI. On the FBI he was quite explicit. He wants to see the FBI reports of their interviews with him. I've promised copies when he is here.

There remain a number of the working press with this general attitude, and every time some drek appears or crosses a desk it hurts us that much more. Sprague was wild even for him at a computers meeting in Chattanooga. JER sent it to me with an apporpriate comment. If we can't close theor slck jaws, we can disassociate from these well-meaning nut who just can't and won't reason on this subject are immune to the overwhelming. I have been through it with Sprague. Lesar laid him out in Mary's presence as she says she has never heard anone addressed, but as you can see, it does not mean a thing.

Chandler:I'd like to see TV guide piece. He was supposed to have been here end of year but hasn't come and I haven't heard from him.

Best, MW